



CITY OF COEUR D'ALENE

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

November 20, 2017 – 5:30 p.m.

COMMUNITY ROOM - LIBRARY

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Scott Cranston, Chair
Mike McDowell, Co-Chair
Bridget Hill
Jim Lien
Christie Wood
Hart Parr Dal Pra
Kinsey Freeman, Alt Student Rep

STAFF PRESENT:

Bill Greenwood, Parks & Rec Director
Katie Kosanke, Urban Forester
Melissa Brandt, Administrative Assistant

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Ron Edinger
Ginny Tate

CALL TO ORDER: Commissioner Cranston called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Six members present, resulting in an official quorum.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Hart led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to approve the minutes of October 16, 2017. Commissioner Hart seconded the motion, there being no discussion and all being in favor, motion passed.

5. STAFF COMMENTS

Bill Greenwood reported that Recreation has swim lessons going on, with 120 kids every 6 weeks learning to swim at the McGrane Center, and we have 400 participants in youth basketball. Men's basketball has 16 league teams that allows for competitive and non-competitive games. Wrestling camp will be held next month in partnership with NIC. Signups for high school age basketball will start next month.

The memorial field deadline we had for the parking lot to be completed by the end of November has been extended due to the snow earlier this month. We will complete the parking lot in early spring. Most of the construction activity has ended for now and will start up again in March. Utilities, the field, retaining wall, electrical system, and grade, are all complete. Playground equipment will be installed next month if weather permits, with the concrete work to take place next spring.

We hope to have the water flowing to the K27 Memorial water feature by the end of this week or next week. Jon Mueller our architect has been working with Todd Bravo, the field man for Clear Water, who is doing an excellent job understanding Jon's concept. We'd like to recognize some heroes on this project Jim Thorpe who has helped with electrical, Jeff Wood has donated most of the stones being used, Tommy Lariviera has stepped up and donated the vault where mechanical will be placed, and fabricating eight benches along the perimeter. A lot of people have stepped up and helped. We thank you.

Commissioner Wood: Last month we talked about the water, in talking with Mayor Widmyer, we decided to have the ribbon cutting in May during Police Week.
Greenwood: We will fire it up to make sure everything is working in the next week and then winterize until spring.

6. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Cranston welcomed our new student representatives, Hart Parr Dal Pra and Kinsey Freeman.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Rick Wilson, 3115 E Fernan Hill Road: We have lived at this address for 8 years. Right now construction is going on, with hundreds of cement trucks and contractors going up and down the road. The proposed park is in an area to make it congested on that roadway, no way to improve to accommodate the traffic. Taxpayers will pay for whatever is done there. Beautiful place to live, taxes are going to skyrocketing with the park coming in. Please understand what you are doing, if someone gives you something doesn't mean you have to take it. That park's going to turn into a wildlife refuge. Property could be used better by the city, could be sold with the profit used to help lower the taxes. Is there going to be a patrol making sure there is no underage drinking going on? Our property values will drop. Changes will increase and increase. Consider short term and long term impact. Thank you for your time.

Greenwood: Idea to sell property is off the table. Emma was adamantly opposed to selling. She had exact terms for what is to be done on that property.

Commissioner McDowell: For those who want to address the Commission, the workshop will not be televised or recorded. If you are going to make public comment, this is the time to do so.

Commissioner Cranston: If and when a master plan moves forward, there will be another public hearing with the Parks and Recreation Commission. There will be additional public commentary recorded on air.

Greenwood: We heard public comments a while back we are hosting this workshop to get additional feedback. We will present findings from this meeting, it will be up to the commission to adopt or make revisions of the master plan.

Commissioner Hill: This is a long term project, correct?

Greenwood: A master plan is a road map. The master plan for this park was agreed to in 2012. It gives us the road map to move forward.

Commissioner Wood: We will be gathering input tonight and all comments will be shared with the commissioners?

Greenwood: Comments from the public will be recorded and shared with the Parks and Recreation Commission. All will be compiled into one document for the commissioners.

Commissioner Hill: This is a long range project with a lot of time and opportunity for input.

Greenwood: We received a letter today from Sandy Emerson who was good friends with Emma's attorney, Sue Flammia. Sue was upset with Doug Eastwood, former Parks Director, because she felt there should have been action on these 16 acres. You will see it in Sandy's comments that Sue had property to donate, but since we didn't do anything with Emma's property, she chose not to. We want people to know this is a public park that they can use; it's a city park, not a neighborhood park.

Judy Kenyon Hanna, 3005 E Fernan Hill Road: I have two artifacts with me. We purchased our property in the early 2000's. I was Emma's neighbor and knew her for 12 years. Emma was very private, lived very simply. I feel very strongly about keeping her cottage and keeping her history. Until the easement is used by the city for the property, our property is being used to access the property. Until an easement is fully utilized, this isn't okay with us. My kids were raised there, our families have been raised there; we preserved her cottage and her legacy. There is a water issue with collection on the road. I reviewed the June meeting minutes, there are no wet lands on the main 16 acres there are some along the road. Asphalt or pavement will overflow that area. We enjoy the property. From my point of view their imagination is what makes that space, it doesn't need anything to improve on. I don't know why there was no requirement for a park or green space on Victoria Lane. I brought some genealogy for the Seagraves family. When she says simple and undeveloped, that's what she wanted. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us.

Robert Erbland, 3007 Fernan Hill Road: I grew up on Fernan property. Speaking on behalf of Emma Van Laken, Emma lived in the bunkhouse at the end of that road. One thing that sticks out to me is her passion for the property, she spoke about it often. She was not ambiguous. She wanted it preserved in the way she knew it. When she passed we had a small ceremony. Her ashes were spread where the proposed parking lot will be. If you pave this land, you are not honoring her. Keep this park as beautiful as it already is.

Peter Erbland, 3007 Fernan Hill Road: I get the idea that this is a city park, not a neighborhood park, I get that this is to be enjoyed by citizens of the city, not just the neighbors. I'm not a "not in my backyard person" I'm also aware of what Emma expressed. There was no concern by Sue that there was no development going on. The property should be enjoyed by all, but keep to the clear language of the gift. I read the article in the newspaper that said the gifting language is ambiguous. It states specifically "retain in as natural a state as possible." I looked those up: retained means keep, natural defined as existing in as caused by nature, not humankind. I think we all know what possible means, being in the limits of ability. Emma had land in a natural state, she kept it in a natural state, gave a gift to the city, with the description that it be kept as natural as possible. The land is a great benefit to the neighbors, it's natural not

to want a bunch of people running around near your home we don't want to resist people enjoying the park. We don't want pavement, that's not natural as possible, keep it gravel access. Judy has allowed people to cross her property to enjoy the park, but to make it official there will need to be a gravel road into the park, more natural than pavement.

Warren Cripples, 8898 N Victorian Drive: I live at the east end of this proposed park. I have opinions in a slightly different nature, most positive aspect is to make it safer from a fire standpoint, reduce fire danger, and keep it as natural as possible to conform to the request of Emma. I moved here twenty years ago, we love the area because it is peaceful and safe, developing the park is a concern to me, how will this be patrolled by the police, they would have to be on dirt bikes or on foot beat, any crimes will be reactive. I served in law enforcement in Los Angeles. The common denominator is vice activities in restrooms, narcotics, and an increase in homeless people staying in the restroom. Restrooms will need to be locked up at night, locked down at sundown to sunrise, and need surveillance cameras.

Commissioner Lein: Peter, could I ask you a question, did you mention that Emma was upset that we hadn't done something to the park. Greenwood: Sandy Emerson indicated Sue was upset that we hadn't done anything with Emma's property, she chose not to donate. Sue's point of view was that Emma wanted something done at that property. Peter Erbland: I also knew Sue. Her concern was that it should not be developed. I had never heard that she was upset that it wasn't developed, and that the property was being held by the Parks Foundation and the City hadn't done anything with it. I didn't know of any property that Sue would deed to the City. Greenwood: The reason the foundation has the property helps us for grant purposes. They hold it in trust, it does go to the city of CDA, it was given so that we can, in the future, choose to do something with it, whatever is allowed on this property, it's not going to be a developed park, it will be in a natural space, developed means an area for parking, maybe some trails, maybe a restroom facility of some kind, we talked about some sort of monument for Veterans, those are the things we talked about, there won't be mowers, or turf grass, we are keeping it in a natural state. It was gifted to the Parks Foundation for grant purposes and to give us the ability to do something that Emma was looking for us to do.

8. COMMUNITY CANOPY AWARD

Katie Kosanke presented information regarding the Community Canopy program, a tree care partnership of the cities of Coeur d'Alene, Hayden, Post Falls, Spokane, and the Spokane County Conservation District, with the assistance of the University of Idaho Extension and Washington State University Extension. Community Canopy members work together toward the goal of healthy and sustainable community forests that provide maximum environmental and visual benefits. The program also provides publications, exhibits, workshops, and in-the-field training. Our effort help reduce improper tree removal and pruning; we seek to improve our community forests. Trees provide many environmental benefits; reducing carbon, providing oxygen, reducing dust particles, providing social benefits, they are aesthetically pleasing, and provide economic values as well, reducing energy costs, increasing property value, and promoting vibrant shopping districts. Our Landscape of Excellence Award is given to a business or organization that encourages good tree care, highlighting those that are doing things right with trees. We accept nominations that are reviewed by our local urban forestry committee. This year, during the widening of Ironwood at I-95, trees that originally were going to need to be removed due to the widening of the street, a

sidewalk that was being moved, and installation of all new infrastructure. Through a partnership effort with Kootenai Health, the Idaho Transportation Department, and the City of Coeur d'Alene, modifications were made to the site plan to limit damage to these trees. Roots were pruned professionally and the work done to limit impact. Cameron Reilly helped relocate the sidewalk further away, Urban Forestry staff, and City Engineer Chris Bosley, all showed cooperative effort with positive discussion to limit the impact on these trees. Because of their flexibility on reducing the impact to trees, the 2017 Landscape of Excellence Award is presented to Kootenai Health by Community Canopy and the City of Coeur d'Alene as a partner. This was a very successful project. Thank you for your hard work to preserve these trees, this location is a wonderful example of partnering to limit impacts to tree roots. We also want to recognize: Bartlett Tree Care Experts, Cameron Reilly Construction, Idaho Transportation Department, and the City of Coeur d'Alene.

9. SKATE PARK FUNDING

Commissioner Cranston read the staff report for the record.

Greenwood: We need approval to utilize funds to complete the Skate Park, part of the Memorial Field redesign. It is a plaza style park with benches, railing and stairs, that doesn't have a bowl element, which is part of Phase II. The Skate Park Association is doing some fundraising to help with the costs. We plan to put out an RFQ, request for qualifications, for the work to ensure we have a contractor that meets the requirements.

Commissioner Wood: Ignite is willing to partner with us, they are a public entity, this is not a gift from the group these are tax payer funds, as are the capital improvement funds.

Commissioner Wood made a motion to allocate \$50,000 from Parks Capital Improvement Fund to complete the funding shortfall to build the new skate park in Memorial Park and to accept Ignite funding. Commissioner Hill seconded the motion, there being no discussion, and all being in favor, the motion passed. This item will move to General Services.

10. PRESENTATION FOR WORKSHOP

Greenwood: Mike Walker has worked with the Natural Open Space Committee to put together a master plan. He is here to give a quick overview then we will adjourn to the workshop. We will seek comments and share information.

Mike Walker: The Natural Open Space Committee was charged with developing a management plan for this property. They developed this conceptual plan. There is no funding for this, we worked to get some ideas out so people could see and give input. We worked for more than 2 years to get to this point, brainstorming many ideas of what could happen at this site these ideas don't have to be used. With improvements at parks, you need to have restrooms, another is parking. The area at Fernan Hill Road and Victoria Place doesn't have much parking; we thought it was important to provide parking and some nice amenities. The idea of an arboretum was in keeping with the natural theme, and as set forth to create better access. Access to the site has never been developed, in order to meet city ordinances and guidelines we have to create a small parking lot. We created a loop so potentially buses could bring school age kids to the site, keeping heavier park development toward the Fernan Hill side of things. Restrooms and maybe a sculpture garden dedicated to the Veterans, a natural playground that isn't structured, and possibly a picnic shelter. We see a potential for schools to visit and see a natural arboretum about wildlife and trees, and trails to improve access

throughout, giving greater mobility to senior citizens, and some benches. These are rough first draft items, we are encouraging input, we want people's ideas for this site.

Commissioner Wood: Does the city own the access, or do we need to ask for easements.

Walker: My understanding is that one of requirements of the gift was a 60 foot right-of-way to access the property, legal access, not just an easement. Wood: We've had two people identify the property is part of the access. Walker: There is an existing gravel road crossing several properties that gain access to the site. The donation required that this land have legal access.

Commissioner Lien: There is no city property giving access right now? Greenwood: No.

Commissioner Wood: Does the parking lot have to be gravel? Walker: City ordinance requires parking lots to be paved. Parking could be phased starting with 10 spaces and increased as need arises. We don't want people parking on people's property we designed the lot to ensure access.

Greenwood: Thanks to everyone for showing up. We really want input trying to work through this the best we can for the citizens. Please note the access to the property being County. Commissioners will be available as well as Mike Kempton and Mike Walker from the NOSC.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Cranston asked for any additional comments.

Upcoming meeting dates:

- Tuesday, December 5, 2017: Workshop; Caruso's Deli, Coeur d'Alene – 11:30 am
- Monday, December 18, 2017: Meeting; Community Room at the Library – 5:30 p.m.

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to adjourn the meeting and enter workshop discussion with Commissioner Hart seconding the motion. All were in favor, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 6:46 pm.